

REMARKS:

The rejection of claims 10 to 15 in the above noted office action is respectfully traversed.

35 USC 103 para 2

BIRK is the principal reference.

Applicants invention accumulates cartons at a transfer station. The groups of cartons are moved from the station sideways to one or other of two packing stations.

BIRK works in a totally different manner.

In BIRK the cartons are lowered down, by a cylinder, into a case located below the station.

They are not transferred sideways, from side to side.

In Birk there is only one packing station. It is located beneath the transfer station.

Applicant has two packing stations. They are located on either side of the transfer station.

Applicants invention is distinguishable.

GOLDBERG. Is cited in combination with BIRK (the principal reference)

In Applicants invention the clamp bars of the gripper are all slidable along slide bars.

There is no sliding action between clamp bars and rods in the reference. The clamps 14 and 20 are both somehow fastened to the screw threaded rods 44 and 46. Presumably this fastening is by being formed with female threads, although this is not explained. The clamps cannot slide on the rods.

Somehow, it is said, the clamp bars can move together to clamp something.

GOLDBERG fails to explain how the two clamps move together.

moved.

We can assume that in some way rotation of the threaded rods moves the clamp bars together. It is not clear how this could work.

If the threaded rods rotate, then the two clamp bars would move along the rods, in the same direction.

It might possibly work if the threads on the two rods were both left and right handed.

This is not described at all.

There is nothing to show how the rods could be rotated, in any case.

There is nothing showing any connection between the motor 42 and the threaded rods 44 and 46.

GOLDBERG is a totally inadequate document, and lacks any clarity.

For example the text refers to element 12. There is no numeral 12 on the drawings.

Where and what is element 12. We do not know.

How can such a poor piece of writing be regarded as making anything "obvious" within 35 USC 103.

This document does not originate in some third world country where drafting and translation difficulties may lead to excusable errors.

It originates from a University research lab, and a US university at that. If university staff are incapable of writing a description of this basic mechanical clamp , with any sufficient degree of clarity, who are we to say that we , or any one else skilled in the art, can understand it.

This alone is sufficient in this submission to disregard it entirely.

It is surprising that such a poor piece of writing succeeded in passing through the

It is surprising that such a poor piece of writing succeeded in passing through the USPTMO examination process at all.

However applicant has revised the claims with a view to clarifying the arrangement of the slide rods and clamp bars.

The clamp bars are attached to alternate right and left hand slide rods.

Set screws 75 and 77, Fig 6, provide this attachment

Movement of one pair of slide rods moves one set of clamp bars in one direction.

Movement of the other pair of slide rods moves the other set of clamp bars in the other direction.

10 This is not related to the clamping by threaded rods as in Goldberg.

New claims 21 to 24 are added.

A clean copy of the claims as amended is attached.

Reconsideration and allowance is earnestly solicited in view of the foregoing. In the event that the Examiner feels that a discussion of the case would be helpful it is respectfully requested that he call the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Yours respectfully,

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CLEAN CLAIMS

10. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing said groups into boxes, and comprising:
a gripper body member;
a first and a second pair of slide rods supported on said gripper body member;
a first pair of clamp bars slideable along said first pair of said slide rods;
a second pair of clamp bars slideable along said second pair of said slide rods,
relative to said first pair of clamp bars; and,
means for sliding said first and second said pairs of clamp bars towards one another
into a gripping position and away from one another into a releasing position.

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11. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 10 and including bearing openings in said clamp bars, and wherein said slide rods extend through respective said bearing openings thereby to permit said sliding of said clamp bars along respective said pairs of said slide rods..

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12. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 11 and wherein said first pair of clamp bars are secured to said second pair of said slide rods, and wherein second pair of said clamp bars are secured to said first pair of said slide rods.

13. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 12 and wherein each of said first pair of slide rods are moveable to

move said second pair of clamp bars, and wherein each of said second pair of slide rods are moveable to move said first pair of clamp bars.

14. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 13 and including a head plate, and two side walls depending downwardly therefrom, slide openings in said side walls for receiving said first and second pairs of slide rods therethrough, and power means supported by said head plate and operatively connected to respective first and second pairs of clamp bars.

15. Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 14 and including rods extending from said power means, and being connected to said first and second pairs of clamp bars, and being operable to move said first and said second pairs simultaneously towards or away from one another.

Claim 21 Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 11 and wherein said first pair of clamp bars comprises an end clamp bar and an intermediate clamp bar, wherein said end clamp bar in said first pair is secured to said second pair of said slide rods, and wherein said second pair of said clamp bars comprises an end clamp bar and an intermediate clamp bar wherein said end clamp bar in said second pair is secured to said first pair of said slide rods.

Claim 22 Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 21 and including first and second frame plates connected to

respective said intermediate clamp bars in respective first and second pairs.

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Claim 23 Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 22 and including rods extending from said power means, and being connected to said first and second frame plates and being operable to procure relative movement of said first and said second pairs of clamp bars simultaneously towards or away from one another.

10 Claim 24 Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 21 and including third and fourth pairs of said clamp bars.

Claim 25 Carton gripper apparatus for gripping groups of cartons for packing as claimed in claim 21 and including fastening devices extending between said first clamp bars and said second pair of slide rods, and fastening devices extending between said second clamp bars and said first pair of slide rods.